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COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting

Tuesday, August 19, 2025
5:00 PM
William J. Johnston Middle School Blackbox Theatre

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT : Chair Donna Antonacci, Vice-Chair Christopher Rivers, Secretary Margo Gignac, Alexander Oliphant, Michelle Millington, Rosemary Gignac and Stefanie Tracey-Calash.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT : Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Assistant Superintendent Jessica L. Kuckel, Bacon Academy (BA) Principal Amy Begué, BA Assistant Principal Jennifer Martin, BA Assistant Principal Michael Mal, William J Johnston Middle School (WJJMS) Principal Meghan Amado, WJJMS Assistant Principal Bonnie McAneny.

OTHERS PRESENT : Director of Finance and Operations Rachel Linkkila, Instructional Technology Coordinator Barbara Johnson, Student Board Member Toheed Usman, Student Board Member Abigail Stillwell.

1. **MEETING OPENING**
   1.1. Call to Order
   Chair Antonacci called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

   1.2 Roll Call
   All present except for M. Millington.

   1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

2. ***ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**
   2.1. *New Agenda Item
   None.

M.Millington arrived at 5:02 PM

3. **STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS REPORT**
   3.1. Introduction of Student Board Member Class of 2027
   Toheed Usman was introduced as the Class of 2027 Student Board Member Representative.

   3.2. Report from Student Board Members
   A.Stillwell stated that Bacon Academy has been actively preparing for the upcoming school

year even though it has not officially started. Fall sports have already begun training, with a meeting held on July 31st, and the boys' soccer team held a successful fundraiser car wash on August 2nd.

The First Day Committee has been meeting frequently to prepare for the start of school, while the National Honor Society has been working on weeding projects and plans to assist Principal Begué with laying weed paper and mulch later this week.

Peer Mentoring has been organizing Freshman Academy, scheduled for August 26th, which will give incoming freshmen the chance to tour the school, meet administrators, and become familiar with their schedules. The carolers have also started rehearsing for the year.

Over the summer, programs such as Summer Reading, hosted by the library, allowed teachers and students to read books and prepare for discussions to take place during the school year.

These activities reflect the ongoing efforts to ensure a strong start to the year.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

4.1. For Public Comments, please see Policy 1120 *Public Comment and Correspondence at Board Meetings*

None.

5. REPORT FROM SCHOOL LIAISONS

5.1. CES

Nothing to report.

5.2. JJIS

Nothing to report.

5.3. WJJMS

After the meeting tonight, M.Millington and C.Rivers will be walking through the building with our new middle school principal as part of preparations before the school year officially begins.

5.4. BA

Nothing to report.

6. *CONSENT AGENDA

6.1. *Approval of Special Meeting Minutes of June 24, 2025

Motion by: C.Rivers

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

Second: A.Oliphant

Roll Call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

6.2. *Approval of WJ Field Trip to MA

See Agenda Item 6.1

7. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

7.1. Administrative Regulations in Policy Manual Update

The policy committee reviewed several policies throughout the school year, which were subsequently approved by the Board. Over the summer, I worked with A.Fratoni to ensure that each revised policy had the appropriate corresponding administrative regulations. While we will not be walking through all of them tonight, the updated regulations are aligned with the active policies and are available in the packet for both board and public review.

7.2. Change in BOE Agenda Related to Goals

From conversations last year, the Board emphasized the importance of ensuring that all efforts are aligned with the goals it has adopted. As a result, the Board's goals, the administration's goals, and the school goals have been carefully streamlined to ensure everyone is working in the same direction. At this point, we are still referring to the 2024–2025 goals, as new goals have not yet been formally adopted. This is something we will continue to focus on this year and moving forward, to ensure there is a clear emphasis on the work the Board is doing and the purpose behind that work.

7.3. Website Update (Goal 3)

At the end of last year, a few updates were shared on the district website, and since then the schools have also updated their individual sites. One of the highlights of the district site is the integration of the district calendar, which now links directly from Google Calendar, pulling information from PowerSchool and ParentSquare to keep the community informed.

Announcements with attachments and pictures also feed directly to the public-facing site. Each school's website now has the ability to display quick updates, such as weather-related closures, along with pictures, links, and other information. Recently, bus routes were published this way, with updates that can be closed while still remaining accessible.

Office professionals, staff, and administrators are able to post to ParentSquare and their Google Calendars, and this information automatically flows to the school and district websites. This makes important updates and events accessible to community members who are not part of ParentSquare, ensuring broader communication. From April 2024 to the present, the website is fully accessible, we are working on archiving March 2024 and earlier to be able to be used with a screen reader and be fully accessible.

The district has been working hard to make the forward-facing website a true representation of Colchester Public Schools and a reliable resource for the community.

7.4. Proposed 2025-2026 Goals for Review

In late July, the administrative team met to review last year's work, set priorities for the year ahead, and draft goals for the Board of Education to consider. The focus remains on aligning Board, administration, and school goals to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. Two draft goals were proposed: fostering community pride so all stakeholders feel valued and connected, and increasing achievement for each student, each with aligned action steps. These are presented in draft form for the Board to review and revisit at the September meeting.

8. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

8.1. Budget Finance Committee

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 21, 2025 at 5:30 PM so there will be an update at the September meeting.

8.2. Curriculum Committee

No update.

8.3. Facilities Committee

No update.

M.Millington will be stepping down from the Facilities Committee due to work scheduling conflicts. This Committee will be moving forward as a two-person Committee until Elections have been finalized in November.

8.4. Policy Committee

No update.

9. *PRIORITY DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

9.1. *Introduction of BA Assistant Principal
Principal Begué introduced Assistant Principal Jennifer Martin.

9.2. *Discussion and Possible Action on an allocation from the Colchester Opioid Settlement Fund for a school therapy dog program (BOE Goals 2 & 4)

After the agenda was published, Superintendent Sullivan received a call from John Zavalik, the school resource officer, who informed him that the police department has decided not to support his taking on a therapy dog. As a result, there is no action required since the initiative will not be moving forward.

9.3. *Discussion and Possible Action on District Accreditation (BOE Goals 1 & 2)

Superintendent Sullivan went over the pricing, what the accreditation would provide for the district, and the rough timeline of the work. Nothing is set in stone until the application is submitted.

Motion by: M.Millington
Motion to approve the District Accreditation process for the Colchester public school system
Second: A.Oliphant
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

10. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS / INFORMATION ITEMS

10.1. Personnel Report
R.Linkkila went over retirements, resignations and new hires from June 1-August 14.

10.2. Items of Correspondence
2 items of correspondence. The first from J.LaChapelle and the second from M.Dubreuil.

10.3. Next Meeting
The next Regular Board of Education meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 9, 2025.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by: C.Rivers
Motion to adjourn.
Second: A.Oliphant
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

Chair Antonacci adjourned the meeting at 5:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Afratoni

Alyssa Fratoni
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent